

That Furious Squabble About the Prettiest Shoulders in England

It Began When Connoisseur Descartes Quite Innocently Admired Lovely Miss Bellew, and Now Rival Beauties Are Making Him Wish He Hadn't

Miss Kyrle Bellew and Her Pretty Shoulders Over Which the Newest European Fuss Has Been Raised.



Maria di Castellani, Famous Italian Dancer, Will Match Her Shoulders Against Those of Any Other Beauty.



Fedorova, the Russian Ballet Dancer, Whose Shoulders Have Been Pronounced Perfect.



Miss Margaret Morris, the English Dancer, Claims to Have Prettier Shoulders Than Miss Bellew.



Miss Helen Morris Is One of the Beauties of the London Stage.

ENGLAND is all a-frog about shoulders — soft shoulders, dimpled shoulders, stately shoulders; shoulders that shimmy; shoulders that are calm as classic marble; vampire shoulders, droopy shoulders, haughty shoulders, timid shoulders; every type and departure of shoulders gracing the form of womankind are in the squabble!

It all began when Maurice Descartes, the famous Parisian artist, wandered into a Piccadilly theatre, gazed at Kyrle Bellew, the actress, and delivered this epic statement: "She is the most beautiful woman in England because she has the prettiest shoulders in England."

That was, so to speak, a shoulder-shaking assertion. For M. Descartes immediately drew on his own shoulders the fire of half the painters and sculptors in England. And they were reinforced by more than a hundred beauties of the studios and the stage, each of whom swung a lovely pair of shoulders herself and was quite eager to match them against Miss Bellew's.

The sculptors and painters, somewhat to the surprise of laymen, agreed with M. Descartes in his estimate of shoulders as woman's finest feature. Truly perfect shoulders, they said, were as rare as radium.

Shoulders, chorused the artists, can be as expressive as eyes. They may invite, repel, defy, dare, languish, ridicule, annihilate with a shrug, plead wistfully with a single tilt, brave the world with one gesture. A face may depend for its attraction on cosmetics; shoulders are beautiful or they are not.

But when it came to admitting the superiority of Miss Bellew's shoulders over all the shoulders in the nation, opinions of the beauty pickers parted in all directions. Each one of the painters had his favorite model; each one of the sculptors had a choice; in scarcely two instances did any two painters or sculptors agree. And, besides these specialists, there were dozens of theatre managers, movie producers, dancing teachers—to say nothing of the beauties themselves—who came forward with candidates to dispute the crown M. Descartes had awarded to Miss Bellew.

Everybody was perfectly willing to admit that Miss Bellew's shoulders were fair to look upon. Miss Bellew, who in private life is Mrs. Arthur Bourchier, is one of the most beautiful women on the English stage. She is a namesake of the late Kyrle Bellew, a relative, who created the role of "Raffles, the Amateur Cracksman," on the stage. In her last play, "The Love Match," she wore several evening gowns that displayed her shoulders strikingly. It was then M. Descartes saw her and awarded her "the prettiest shoulders in England" title.

"That tut!" protested one leading artist. "That is going a bit extravagantly. Has M. Descartes seen Ruby Lorraine?"

Ruby Lorraine is perhaps the most admired model in London, and among her most fetching features are her shoulders. They are the slender sloping type generally characteristic of Frenchwomen, as opposed to the modern Italian and ancient Grecian women, whose shoulders were practically as broad as the hips.

"Miss Bellew has beautiful shoulders,"

agreed another artist. "But they are classic—chaste. I prefer shoulders of a more voluptuous type. For example, the shoulders of Fedorova, the Russian dancer. They are not only beautiful in repose, they are exquisitely sensitive in their every movement. Fedorova can put a poem into a shrug."

Similar qualities were urged for the shoulders of Margaret Morris and Helen Morris, dancers. Their advocates argued that the beauty of shoulders could not be measured as one would judge a still life painting; shoulders were as much a part of the personality of their owner as her mouth and eyes. They should react to all emotions—laugh when she laughed, weep when she wept, rejoice when she was jubilant.

An American candidate for the "prettiest shoulders" prize came forward in the person of Dorothy Dickson, the Chicago girl who has delighted London with her charm in the title role of "Sally." Her backers offered to bet that no woman in the world—let alone England!—could bring shoulders to match those Miss Dickson presents to the public gaze when she advances down the golden stairway in the garden party scene in "Sally."

Of course, France couldn't let the United States and Great Britain bargain for such a concession all by themselves. Polaire, the celebrated Parisian dancer, was starring in a London revue. She boasts

Miss Ruby Lorraine, Raphael Kirchner's First Model, Is Now One of the Most Famous Models in England. Compare Her Shoulders with Miss Bellew's.



At Right, Dorothy Dickson, the Chicago Beauty, Whose Shoulders Are Declared to Be the Prettiest in England.



that she is "the ugliest woman in the world." But not in grace of movement! The French said they were willing to champion Polaire's shoulders against the shoulders of Dorothy Dickson, Kyrle Bellew, Fedorova or any other beauty.

Polaire had scarcely been entered by her compatriots for the shoulder stakes when the controversy took on an even more international tinge. The public was invited to consider the shoulders of Maria di Castellani, of Milan, Italy, who was then dancing at one of the leading night clubs.

Artistic and Bohemian London are getting more and more "het up" over the shoulder squabble with every new entry. Latest reports are that society is becoming interested and is likely to enter several "prettiest shoulders" winners of its own.

Thus far, however, the stage and the studios are the battleground of the shoulder-shakers, with Miss Bellew England's best bet against Miss Dickson, of the U. S. A.; Polaire, of France; Fedorova, representing Russia, and Maria di Castellani from sunny Italy. The artists and the beauties themselves are taking it very seriously, but the wags are suggesting that if matters get much more hectic Lloyd George will have to call another European conference to settle the question once and for all as to who has the prettiest shoulders to England.

Polaire, Admits She Isn't a Stage Beauty, but When It Comes to Pretty Shoulders, Well—